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Knicks in
Cleveland
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LeBron,
Cavaliers.
20

FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Ben and Jen keep things awkward for the holidays. 14

Michael Moore tries to
save the world. 16-17

TIME IS MONEY



Startup hopes to open NYC's first
"anti-cafe," where customers pay by
the hour — but the coffee is free. 6

BERGDAHL ARRAIGNED

1 Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, who spent five years as a Taliban prisoner after walking away from his combat outpost in Afghanistan in 2009, did not enter a plea Tuesday at his arraignment on charges spurred by his disappearance. Bergdahl was ordered last week to face a court-martial after being charged earlier this year with desertion and endangering U.S. troops. **REUTERS**



COLLEGE DORM GUN BAN

2 Public universities in Texas would be breaking a new state law if they ban guns from student dormitories, because such a prohibition would violate the rights of people with licenses to carry concealed handguns, the state's attorney general said. Republican Attorney General Ken Paxton issued his nonbinding legal opinion late Monday after an advisory panel convened by the University of Texas system, one of the nation's largest with more than 214,000 students, recommended Dec. 10 largely banning guns from dormitories. **REUTERS**

SELF-DRIVING CARS

3 Google is said to be in talks with Ford Motor Co. to help build the company's autonomous cars, Automotive News reported. The contract manufacturing deal, if finalized, is expected to come during the annual International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas during the first week of January. **REUTERS**



RAINY AND BALMY

7 People walk past the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center on Dec. 22, 2015 in New York City. Despite being only days away from Christmas, New York City and much of the Northeast is experiencing rainy and balmy weather. The forecast for Christmas in New York is for temperatures in the 60s.

ALL PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

LEOPARD PRINT THIEF

4 Police are looking for one stylish suspect who got away with more than \$2,000 from a Queens bank last week. On Dec. 18, the man, wearing a leopard print waist-length jacket, entered an Astoria Bank branch at 97-33 Queens Blvd. in Rego Park and passed a note to a teller demanding money, cops said. The teller complied and gave the suspect \$2,600. The man then fled in an unknown direction. **ANGY ALTAMIRANO**



KICKED IN THE GENITALS

5 A Brooklyn man claimed NYPD officers kicked him so hard that he had to have a testicle removed. Corey Green, 32, was playing cards with friends in a Bed-Stuy apartment Saturday when cops entered looking for a robbery suspect, his father said to the New York Post, which added that Green reportedly walked away from police when he was asked to provide his identification. Police then allegedly threw Green to the ground "and were kicking his genitals," Green's father said in the Post article. **JASON NUCKOLLS**

BRONX MARKET SHOOTING

6 The NYPD is searching for the shooter responsible for opening fire in a Bronx supermarket Monday. Authorities said a man wielding a gun entered C-Town at 564 Southern Boulevard before noon and shot a 21-year-old male victim three times in the torso before fleeing on foot, Gothamist reported. The victim remains in stable condition. Surveillance video shows the shootout as the gunman took aim and fired rounds from the row of front-end cash registers. **JASON NUCKOLLS**

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BRIEF

Landlords illegally removing central heating system in rent-regulated New York City buildings: Cuomo

The state is cracking down on bad landlords who are breaking the law — and hurting their tenants.

A investigation has revealed that landlords in more than two dozen rent-regulated buildings in the city have been illegally removing central heating systems

and forcing residents to pay for their own heat and hot water, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Monday.

By law, landlords at these buildings are required to pay and provide heat and hot water to the rent-regulated tenants. Instead, 145 of these tenants were led to pay for their own heat after the landlords installed individual apartment meters.

"My administration is com-

mitted to protecting the rights of all tenants, and this action is another example of how we are standing up for New Yorkers and holding unscrupulous landlords accountable," Cuomo said. "These landlords are going to restore their central heating systems, and others should be aware that we will not hesitate to crack down on any illegal behavior."

Through joint city and state

neighborhood inspections and tips from local leaders, the Tenant Protection Unit (TPU) discovered a pattern of abuse in dozens of buildings — primarily in areas where real estate prices have been increasing such as Bushwick and Williamsburg.

Tenants living in a rent-stabilized apartment who feel they are being harassed are asked to call ORA or TPU at 718-739-6400. **ANGY ALTAMIRANO**



Nonunion city employees will get six weeks of parental leave. **GETTY IMAGES**

City workers to get 6 weeks parental leave

New parents will have one less thing to worry about in the new year when welcoming a bundle of joy to their family.

Starting Jan. 1 about 20,000 of the city's nonunion workers are expected to receive six weeks of paid time off for parental — maternity, paternity, adoption and foster care — leave.

During this time the employees will be able to receive 100 percent of their salary or up to 12 weeks total when combined with existing leave, such as sick time or vacation days.

"When new parents — women and men — are able to take time to care for their children without losing their jobs or their pay, it benefits families, communities and businesses by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to contribute and compete regardless of parental status," said Teresa C. Younger, president and CEO of Ms. Foundation for Women.

To provide these six weeks to all managerial and unrepresented employees, the city plans to remove two days of

existing vacations from long-service workers and get rid of an existing 0.47 percent raise for managers scheduled for 2017.

"Too many new parents face an impossible choice: taking care of their child or getting their paycheck," Mayor Bill de Blasio said. "New York City is leading by example, putting us at the forefront of paid parental leave policies around the country."

The new policy does not include union workers, although the mayor is said to be ready to "immediately enter talks" with the city's municipal unions in regards to them extending the rule to covered employees.

Henry Garrido, executive director of District Council 37, welcomed the news and hopes to soon work with the city to extend the policy to DC 37 members.

"As a parent of two children, I fully support the mayor's action today and look forward to engaging in collective bargaining with the city to ensure that our members also enjoy this vital benefit as soon as possible," Garrido said. **ANGY ALTAMIRANO**

"Too many new parents face an impossible choice: taking care of their child or getting their paycheck."

De Blasio

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"Anti-café" PROVIDED

Startup group aims to open NYC's first 'anti-café'



Kickstarter campaign begun to bring alternative café to one of the five boroughs where you only pay for time spent there.



ANGY ALTAMIRANO
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

If you ever felt forced to buy another cup of coffee just to be able to stay at a coffee shop and relax or work — one "anti-café" is looking to relieve that stress.

The team behind the startup company Reasonance International has launched a Kickstarter campaign to bring the concept of the "anti-café" to New York City through a shop called "TimeSquirrel" — making it the first of its kind in the country.

At an "anti-café" — made popular in several eastern European countries — customers pay for the time spent at the establishment and not for food or drinks.

Emil J. Ismayilov, one of the board members of Reasonance and partner behind the project, said the group thought New York would be the "perfect place" for this kind

of café because of its large young and creative population.

"If you walk around New York, you see a lot of people spending a lot of time in cafes. People sit in cafes for four, five hours nonstop and they get one cup of coffee and after half an hour they feel uncomfortable without buying anything," Ismayilov said. "This idea is totally different. You don't have to purchase anything, you just have to purchase time."

Although the group has yet to select a specific location, Ismayilov said they are looking at neighborhoods such as Williamsburg, Astoria and some parts of Manhattan.

"This idea is totally different. You don't have to purchase anything, you just have to purchase time."

Ismayilov

"It's New York, there are so many people and so many students," Ismayilov said. "We don't have a specific area yet, but it has to be an area where there is a lot of young and creative people."

The set up for the café is expected to have a "home or apartment style," allowing customers to relax either by lying on a couch, sitting on the floor or getting together

with other young professionals to collaborate at work stations.

There will also be a television people can enjoy and calm music playing, adding on to the "relaxing" atmosphere, Ismayilov said.

"TimeSquirrel" is also expected to feature an open kitchen where customers can take whatever they want, whenever they want. The menu will include coffee, a variety of teas, fresh cookies, snacks and several kinds of sandwiches.

"If you come to this café, you have to feel like you've come home," Ismayilov said.

The team is still working on the hourly rates, but say they will be affordable.

Although the Kickstarter hopes to raise some funds to bring the idea of the café to fruition, Ismayilov added that if the goal isn't reached in time, the plan is to still make "TimeSquirrel" happen — he hopes by next summer.

"The Kickstarter is just a platform where we can see how people will react to this, see people's opinions," Ismayilov said. "If the project does not reach the goal, it doesn't mean it's going to stop there."

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Identities revealed for all six troops killed in Afghanistan attack



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A female officer in the Air Force, who was one of the first openly gay service members to get married, was identified on Tuesday as being among six U.S. troops killed by a suicide bomber near Bagram air base in Afghanistan.

Air Force Maj. Adriana Vorderbruggen is the first openly gay woman to be killed in action, the Daily Beast reported, citing a Department of Defense official.

Six American troops, including Vordersbruggen, were killed Monday when a suicide bomber on a motorbike struck their patrol in the deadliest attack on U.S. forces this year.

Facebook postings Tuesday by Vorderbruggen's loved ones mourned her death Monday and sent condolences to her wife, Heather, and son, Jacob. The family lives near Washington.

D.C., where the couple was married in June 2012, the year after the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy for gays was repealed.

"We do find comfort in knowing that Heather and Jacob are no longer in the shadows and will be extended the rights and protections due any American military family as they move through this incredibly difficult period in their lives," said the posting from Military Partners and Families Coalition.

Bagram, around 25 miles north of Kabul, is one of the main bases for the remaining 9,800 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, after international troops ended combat operations last year.

The victims included New York City Detective Joseph Lemm, a 15-year veteran of the NYPD who also volunteered in the U.S. Air National Guard

and was on his third deployment to war zones.

Local media in Statesboro, Georgia, identified a third victim as serviceman Chester McBride Jr., who was remembered by the principal of Statesboro High School as "a young man of high character with a great smile."

Serviceman Michael Anthony Cinco of Rio Grande Valley, Texas, was identified by local media as another victim.

Facebook postings identified others as Staff Sgt. Peter Taub, whose family lives in the Washington, D.C., area, and Louis Bonacasa from New York.

Wrote Air Force member Jeffrey Behrman: "Joseph Lemm and Louis Bonacasa, I'm glad to have known you men, I'm glad I was able to buy you men a couple pints before you left for Afghanistan."

REUTERS

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US signs up 8.2M so far for insurance on HealthCare.gov

HealthCare.gov sells subsidized individual insurance in 37 states.

The federal government has signed up 8.2 million people for health insurance through the HealthCare.gov website, including 2.1 million people from the insurers' most sought-after demographic: those under age 35, the top health official said Tuesday.

That compares with the 6.4 million people who signed up or were automatically enrolled at this time last year, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell said during a conference call.

The enrollment figures come at a time when expectations for 2016 signups have been tempered. The government has said it expects total



Enrollment remains open through the end of January. GETTY IMAGES

enrollment of 10 million people via both HealthCare.gov and the state-based exchanges at the end of 2016, about half of what its 2016 estimate had been earlier this year.

Large health insurers have been lukewarm on the market, saying it is a challenge to make money there.

Health insurer UnitedHealth Group Inc. said last month the low en-

rollment and high medical costs of those covered through the exchanges were causing the company to lose money. It said it would have to review its participation in the two dozen states where it sells plans next year.

The 8.2 million people signed up or automatically re-enrolled in a plan as of Dec. 19 will have coverage effective Jan. 1. Enrollment remains

open through the end of January.

On Friday, the government announced that enrollment was running faster than last year and that 6 million people had signed up through Dec. 17. Shares of insurers rose.

The government said it estimated more than 9.1 million people were enrolled for health coverage through HealthCare.gov and the state-based exchanges at the end of 2015.

Of the 9.3 million people who were enrolled at the end of September, about 84 percent received subsidies, the government said. The average subsidy was \$271 a month. Enrollment fluctuates as people gain or lose employment-based insurance or have a change in status, such as getting married.

REUTERS

Latest Secret Service snafu: stolen badge, gun, radio

A Secret Service agent lost his badge, gun and radio when a bag was stolen from his car, the latest in a series of mishaps for the agency charged with protecting the president and his family.

The agent had parked his vehicle several blocks from the White House just before 4 p.m. on Monday, according to a police report filed with the Metropolitan Police Department.

When he returned to the vehicle, he noticed the back window of the

vehicle was open, and a bag containing the items — along with a flash drive and handcuffs — was missing, the report said.

A Secret Service spokesman declined to comment on the incident Tuesday.

The agency has weathered a lengthy list of problems during the past few years, including a prostitution scandal in Colombia, a drinking and driving incident, and a high-profile security lapse when a man jumped the fence surrounding the complex and ran into the mansion armed with a knife.

Earlier this month, an officer was indicted for allegedly trying to "sext" with someone he thought was a teenager but was actually an undercover officer. REUTERS



Secret Service patrol in front of the White House. GETTY IMAGES



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Real estate heir Robert Durst to be extradited to LA in writer's death

Durst has been held in a Louisiana jail since being arrested in March and faces a sentence of up to 10 years in prison on the firearm charge.

Real estate heir Robert Durst, charged in the 15-year-old murder of a longtime friend as a television show suggested he might have killed her, will return to California from Louisiana to face a homicide charge, prosecutors said Tuesday.

Durst, who also faces charges of illegal firearms possession in federal court in Louisiana, will be ar-

raigned on a single murder charge in the 2000 killing of writer Susan Berman by Aug. 18, 2016 in Superior Court in Los Angeles, District Attorney Jackie Lacy said.

An HBO series that aired in February and March documented several police investigations of Durst, including ones of the dismemberment killing of a male neighbor in Texas in 2003, for which he was tried and acquitted of murder, and the 1982 disappearance in New York of his wife, Kathleen.

He was convicted in 2004 for jumping bail and carrying a weapon across state lines while fleeing authorities in Texas in the dismemberment case.

The extradition agreement allows time for Durst to be prosecuted first in federal court in New Orleans, where he faces a six-month-old charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm, af-



Robert Durst GETTY IMAGES

ter a search of his New Orleans hotel room in March turned up a handgun.

Durst, who initially pleaded not guilty to that charge and claimed the search was illegal, was expected to change his plea to guilty, the judge involved in the New Orleans case confirmed to Reuters last week.

But that has been post-

poned because of scheduling issues, the New Orleans Times-Picayune reported. As a result,

Durst's return to Los Angeles may be delayed beyond the Aug. 18 date if legal proceedings are still continuing in Louisiana, Jane Robison, a spokeswoman for the L.A. district attorney's office, said Tuesday. **REUTERS**

BRIEF

Wine collector loses appeal of counterfeiting conviction

A U.S. appeals court rejected the appeal of a prominent wine dealer who was sentenced to 10 years in prison for selling millions of dollars of rare and expensive counterfeit wine.

The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New York upheld the

2013 conviction and subsequent sentence of Rudy Kurniawan, 39, an Indonesian-born wine dealer who federal prosecutors called a "kingpin of counterfeit."

On appeal, Kurniawan argued among other things that evidence secured from a warrantless search of his home following his arrest in 2012 should

have been suppressed and that his 10-year prison sentence was unreasonable.

Prosecutors said Kurniawan, from 2004 to 2012, engaged in a systematic scheme to defraud collectors and others by selling counterfeit bottles of rare and expensive wine.

REUTERS


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SpaceX Falcon rocket nails safe landing in pivotal space feat



A handout picture made available by SpaceX on Tuesday shows a nine-minute exposure picture of the launch, re-entry and landing burns of SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida. GETTY IMAGES

A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket blasted off from Florida on Monday with a payload of communications satellites before the reusable main-stage booster turned around, soared back to Cape Canaveral and landed safely near its launch pad in a dramatic spaceflight first.

The mission, capped by delivery of all 11 satellites to orbit for launch customer Orbcomm Inc., unfolded in just over 30 minutes and marked a reversal of fortunes for privately owned Space Exploration Technologies, or SpaceX, founded by high-tech entrepreneur Elon Musk.

It was the first flight for his California-based company since a rocket failure in June that destroyed a cargo ship being

carried on a resupply mission bound for the International Space Station.

The upgraded, 23-story-tall Falcon 9 rocket lifted off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station at 8:29 p.m. EST, with the nine-engine suborbital main stage returning 10 minutes later to a landing site about 6 miles south of its launch pad. The upper-stage booster continued its ascent to Earth orbit with its payload.

Musk has said the ability to return his rockets to Earth so they can be refurbished and reflown would slash his company's operational costs in the burgeoning and highly competitive private space launch industry.

SpaceX employees erupted in jubilation as they watched live video

footage of the 156-foot-tall white first-stage booster slowly descending upright through a damp, darkened night sky amid a glowing orange ball of light to make a picture-perfect landing.

Rival company Blue Origin, a space startup founded by Amazon Chief Executive Jeff Bezos, nailed a similar return rocket landing test last month. In a seemingly back-handed compliment to SpaceX, Bezos tweeted a message of congratulations to Musk's company, saying: "Welcome to the club!"

But the SpaceX feat, which the company had characterized before launch as a "secondary test objective," was achieved during an actual commercial mission. REUTERS

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Jennifer Garner is spending Christmas with Ben Affleck's new face

The first Christmas post-breakup — especially when there are small children involved — can be a tricky one. So Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck's newly refreshed looking face are putting up a united front, celebrating the holiday together for the sake of family harmony, according to *Us Weekly*. "Christmas morning they will all be together to open presents," a source says, adding that the clan will be celebrating at a cabin in Montana. "Ben and Jen want their kids' childhood memories to still be good." But don't take this show of cooperation as anything more than some good, solid co-parenting. "Ben and Jen are together



ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

only for the kids, not romantically," the source warns. Ben looks pretty calm about the whole thing.

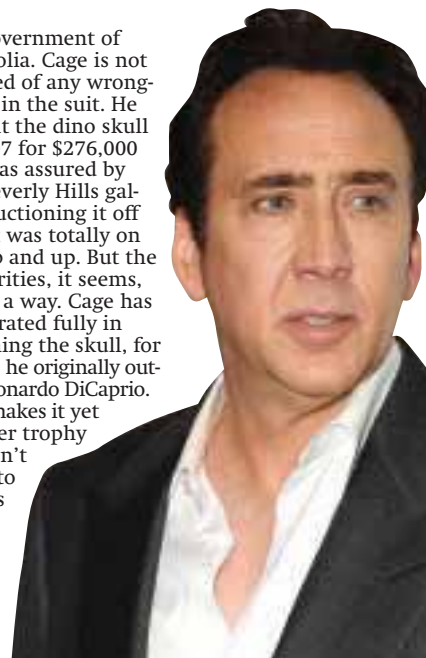
the word

NED EHRBAR
ned.ehrbar@metro.us

Nic Cage returns his stolen dinosaur head. Wait, what?

I swear this is a real story and not the result of some fever dream or an inspired round of gossip word scramble. Kooky actor Nicolas Cage — famed for his penchant for outlandish purchases — has been forced to return a dinosaur skull because it turns out to be stolen. The U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan filed for forfeiture last week to return the tyrannosaurus bataar skull to

the government of Mongolia. Cage is not accused of any wrongdoing in the suit. He bought the dino skull in 2007 for \$276,000 and was assured by the Beverly Hills gallery auctioning it off that it was totally on the up and up. But the authorities, it seems, found a way. Cage has cooperated fully in returning the skull, for which he originally outbid Leonardo DiCaprio. That makes it yet another trophy Leo can't seem to get his hands on.



@evanrachelwood
"It's a beautiful war."



@justinbieber
Don't worry @IAMSteveHarvey it could of happened to anyone.



@billyeichner
Ok I just rewatched Travolta's entire Adele Dazeem intro. I forgot that it opens with him saying "I love you" to the audience!!! The best.



@JuddApatow
My book Sick In The Head really is a great Christmas present. And it is for charity. And it is thick enough to seem like a good present.



@elonmusk
11 satellites deployed to target orbit and Falcon has landed back at Cape Canaveral. Headed to LZ-1. Welcome back, baby!



@bobsaget
I'm way up I feel blessed.

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Jessica 6: 'I want to reach women living in the shadows'

Singer Nomi Ruiz shines after going through dark times.



EMILY LAURENCE
@EmLaurence
emily.laurence@metro.us

Blending R&B with disco isn't something typically seen on the music charts, but then again, Jessica 6 frontwoman Nomi Ruiz has always done the unexpected. After leaving Hercules and Love Affair and forming Jessica 6 in 2011, the Brooklyn-based artist started getting attention in both electronic and hip-hop circles. We talked with Ruiz about being a woman of transgender origin and using music as therapy.

More than 'trans'

The media often labels Ruiz as a "trans musician," which she says is a double-edged sword. "There are issues I think should be addressed — and I don't mind addressing them — but sometimes I feel like I'm being put in a box," the 29-year-old tells us.

"For me, the trans part is something in my past that I've been through. It's something I hold and carry with me always. I know it puts me in a category where I identify with other people in the world who are going through their issues."

Turning anguish into art

While listeners of all genders and sexual orientation can connect to Jessica 6's latest album, "The Capricorn," Ruiz says she wrote it specifically with women of trans experience in mind. "I never had a record to go to where I felt, wow, that's exactly what I'm going through," she says. "I wanted to reach these women who have been in the shadows or darkness."

Ruiz says the lyrics express her pain of being ostracized by past lovers, revealing that when she wrote the songs, she was in a dark place and used songwriting as a way to figure out what exactly

was pushing her over the edge. The act of turning her anguish into art saved her.

"I feel like my purpose [in life] is to really deliver these songs. Whenever something beautiful comes out of a dark moment, I feel, OK, this is the reason [that bad thing happened]. So I can deliver this message."

Going all out

Ruiz is gearing up for her New York City concert, which is especially meaningful to her as a lifelong New Yorker. She grew up in Sunset Park and says always hearing music in the streets truly inspired her sound. She still lives in Brooklyn, only now in Bushwick.

"We're going to put on a fabulous full dynasty," she says of the New Year's Eve performance at the Reflections Gala, one of New York City's buzziest LGBT parties of the year. "I love to work with dancing and lighting and using whatever resources I have to put on a beautiful show for everyone."

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ANTHONY LANE, *THE NEW YORKER*



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SCOTT MANTZ, *access hollywood*



"Carell embodies the film's tone, as a borderline comic figure who GROWS IN STATURE AND VISION."
MICK LASALLE, *San Francisco Chronicle*

"COMPELLING."
SCOTT MENDELSON, *Forbes*

"FASCINATING AND FUNNY."
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Time Out New York

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Michael Moore: The Republican Party is 'over'

The firebrand storms the globe for great social services in "Where to Invade Next."



MATT PRIGGE
@mattprigge
matt.prigge@metro.us

Michael Moore is back with his first movie in six years. "Where to Invade Next," which hits New York City and L.A. on Dec. 23 and nationwide in February, finds him traveling the globe

Just friends

Do you actually tend to get along with conservatives?

Yeah. I treat them like human beings. I don't see them in a dehumanized manner. I don't see them as the devil. I just see them as wrong. And I love to debate. If they want to debate me on the issues, I love that. But if they want to go for personal attacks, I just say to them, "You know you're admitting you lost the debate on ideas, because you have to go to that place."



highlighting social services done better in other countries than in America: lavish school lunches in France, extravagant vacation time in Italy, prisons that actually seek to reform inmates in Norway, free women's health clinics in Tunisia. Thing is, he says, these can all be a reality here, too.

Things have been very, very bad for the world in the last few months, but I feel this film is an optimistic burst of fresh air. It's like a utopian thought

experiment for ways to we could hypothetically fix little parts of America.

Except the difference between utopia and this is: This is all actually happening in these countries. This is real. It's not a fantasy. I want someone in charge here to tell me with a straight face they can do [healthful student lunches] in Slovenia but they can't do it here. Somehow they can afford it but we can't.

There's always a pushback against these issues, even good ones, and usually from the far right. Why do you think that is?

Because they're angry, old white guys — guys who like their La-Z-Boys, do the same things

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In "Where to Invade Next," out today, Michael Moore travels the globe, looking at social services done better in places other than America. **SUBVERSIVE COMEDY**

every day the same way. Change is hard to take. But it's too late. It's over. Those days are over. The Republican Party is over. The Republican Party can't win the White House. We would all have to stay home. Eighty-one percent of those voting next year are either female, people of color or young adults between the ages of 18 and 35. That's 81 percent of the population. They have offended and alienated all three of those groups. Not a single young person thinks they're cool. I haven't seen a lot of 19-year-olds running around with Ted Cruz T-shirts on. They're over, and they know they're over. That's why they push back on these things, because they know it's

their dying days.

You made this film under the radar. You weren't talking about it on social media as you were making it, and people didn't know what it was until it played the Toronto Film Festival. Why did you do this incognito?
I wanted to unplug from the noise. I wanted to be away from the hype. We wanted to focus on the work. You don't know me personally — and I don't want to put words in your mouth — but you may think I'm somebody who likes to have the bully pulpit, who goes on the Oscar stage and screams, "Shame on you, Mr. Bush!" But I haven't been on TV since October of 2013.

Fun with economic catastrophe

Hamish Linklater finds the humor in the 2008 housing crisis with "The Big Short."



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Delightfully off-beat indie actor Hamish Linklater lent his skills to the deep bench of talent in Adam McKay's financial meltdown exposé, "The Big Short." But before he could do that, he had to try to understand the housing crisis and the bizarre economic jargon that helped precipitate the 2008 collapse.

You're dealing with some dense subject matter, but the movie keeps a sense of humor about it.

Yeah, yeah. If you want people to eat their veggies, you should probably top it with a little hot fudge and a cherry on top. And Adam McKay is a master sundae-maker, as we all know.

I'm trying to imagine broccoli with chocolate sauce on it.

Oh, it's delicious! You haven't had fondue until you've tried it with cauliflower. [Laughs]

How do you handle improvisation when dealing with characters who have such a distinct vocabulary?

It's tricky. You have to unfortunately do a little research so that you have a couple of terms to throw out there. But



Steve Carell and Hamish Linklater battle some fiscal frustrations in "The Big Short." **PARAMOUNT PICTURES**

ultimately, you're not going to get a huge return on cracking wise about CDOs. It's only funny up to a point, but mostly it's just inside jokes.

What was your own level of understanding of all of this going in?
I definitely went in a virgin and came out a whore as far as my understanding of what was going on. And when you do find out, you do feel totally corrupted, like you have gone into a bordello because it's just awful. It's so shocking. The fact that they come up with these terms like "collateralized debt obligation" to hide that they're basically f—ing you bare — it's a CDO instead of an FYB — so they're good at their boring names over there.

What do you think of audiences coming out of this movie pissed off?
That's good, that's

useful. That's a good entertainment experience that galvanizes you. I have to say, almost everyone I know who has seen it, they come out like they've seen "Saw VII" or something like that. They've sweat so much, they feel really paranoid and really upset, and most people jump on the phone with their brokers, if they have them, or call their mothers.

Personal experience

What are your own memories of the 2008 crash?

I bought a house around that time, and I was like, "I'm pretty sure I can't afford this." And pretty soon it became apparent that I was right. I didn't have enough money for the house, no matter how much my brokers and everybody told me I did.



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The best flowers for your holiday party

UrbanStems shares the secrets to creating festive holiday arrangements.

AMANDA VALENTOVIC
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The holidays aren't complete without decorations, and flowers could be the finishing touch you're looking for this winter. Cameron Hardesty, director of products at UrbanStems, an affordable flower delivery service in New York City that hand delivers seasonal bouquets via bicycle, tells us which stems will challenge the mighty Christmas tree in having the biggest wow factor at your holiday party this year.

Put a twist on a classic holiday theme

While the standard holi-

day plants amaryllis and poinsettias will always work for your holiday gathering, don't be afraid of trying something different. "Amaryllis can be expensive, and you're never sure when they'll bloom," warns Hardesty. She suggests going with pine or spruce bouquets to make your table setting stand out. Hardesty also likes different takes on holiday colors: She uses calla lilies and silver dollar eucalyptus for a wintery effect.

Flower power

If traditional isn't really your style, go wild with flowers. "Fresh garlands are normally on banisters, but you can use them as table runners," says Hardesty. "It looks festive and really rustic for Christmas." She also suggests sticking some succulents in the garland for a trendier piece.



Try eucalyptus in your arrangements for a wintery feel, suggests Hardesty.

Hardesty also likes kissing balls, which are dense balls of florals used as decor. "You can hang them from the ceiling or even off the backs of chairs at the table," she says.

Stick with seasonal

Hardesty says to use anything seasonal in your floral arrangements. "A plant that seems like it's made for this time of the year is magnolia. The leaves have an interesting texture," she says. "One side is red and one side is green, so they're great for



The Natalia bouquet, available on UrbanStems.com, features magnolia leaves.



Succulents update traditional arrangements. iStock

Christmas." To get that floral scent, Hardesty recommends "buying them

at a farmer's market, because they're cheaper and they're always fresh."

7 things to know about Manhattan's residential market

Median price hit \$1.1M and new development closings shot up 60 percent.

TheRealDeal.com is a daily blog and monthly magazine covering real estate in the New York metro area.

THE REAL DEAL

By the time the ball drops Dec. 31, roughly \$24 billion of Manhattan residential real estate will have traded hands during the year, according to CityRealty.

In a year-end report, CityRealty said the median sale price is projected to hit a record \$1.1 million in 2015, up from \$970,000 in 2014. The average was no bargain, either — at a record \$1.9 million. The 16-page report — with projections based on closed sales as of Nov. 30 — is full of fun facts about record prices, priciest neighborhoods and toniest buildings. We sifted through the data for these seven insights.

1 Condos were no bargain

The median condo sale

reached a record \$1.6 million, up from \$1.5 million in 2014. Thirty-four percent of condo sales were downtown, accounting for \$4.2 billion in sales.

2 Buyers took their time

The number of units traded — 12,700 — was lower than last year's 12,900. Co-ops saw 7,200 sales valued at \$10 billion. Condos saw 5,500 sales valued at \$14 billion.

3 At long last, the new condos were ready

New condo closings will jump more than 60 percent to 1,340 in 2015, according to CityRealty's projection, compared with 836 in 2014. But the average price of new units dropped to \$3.9 million from \$4.8 million in 2014.

4 The luxury market showed its softer side

There were 190 sales of more than \$10 million in 2015, down 11 percent from 214 sales in that

price range in 2014. But properties between \$4 million and \$10 million were booming, with \$10.7 billion total sales compared to \$10 billion last year.

5 NoHo: where prices shot up the most

The neighborhood's average price per square foot shot up 27 percent to \$2,583, a steeper jump than any other neighborhood. That's largely because of Stillman Development's Schumacher project, a 20-unit development at 36 Bleecker St.

6 Even the priciest pad was only \$91M

Last year, a buyer paid \$100.5 million for a penthouse at Extell Development's One57. The building took the year's priciest sale this year, too, with hedge fund manager Bill Ackman's purchase of a \$91.5 million pad. Billionaire Len Blavatnick set a co-op record at 834 Fifth Ave., where he paid \$77.5 million. (That deal was also the second-priciest sale of the year.)



The Schumacher at 36 Bleecker St. PROVIDED

7 One57 wins again

Not surprisingly, One57 had \$564.9 million in aggregate sales in 2015 the most of any building, followed by One Riverside Park with \$315.9 million in sales. Fun fact: One57 had just 26 sales to One Riverside Park's 122 transactions. E.B. SOLOMONT

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Drafted in the same class, LeBron James and Carmelo Anthony will forever be linked. GETTY IMAGES

LeBron vs. Carmelo showdown up in air

The Knicks will face a stiff test Wednesday in Cleveland.

TONY WILLIAMS
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sports@metro.us

The Knicks may be much improved over last season, as they're already creeping toward last year's win total of 17. But they still have a ways to go to gain the respect of the rest of the league.

Wednesday night's matchup with the Cleveland Cavaliers (18-7) at Quicken Loans Arena will be a great litmus test for a New York (14-15) squad that is looking to gain traction as it tries to stay within range of the eighth seed, currently owned by the Orlando Magic (16-12) — a team they lost to Monday night at the Garden.

They may have to engage the Cavs sans Carmelo Anthony, who sprained his ankle late in the third quarter of the Magic game. Anthony, a known gunner, was so hampered that he was more of a decoy and a willing passer in the fourth quarter.

He admitted he may have to do the same Wednesday.

"As of right now, I'll be playing. But who knows? I don't want to miss it [going against LeBron James], but I've got to be smart," Anthony said, adding that

Knicks notes

Adding to the Knicks' injury front, forward Kyle O'Quinn won't commit to playing Wednesday, as he's battling a right ankle sprain that he suffered in Chicago on Saturday. O'Quinn had steadily been getting minutes in Fisher's sporadic rotation, and was looking forward to playing his former team, Orlando, on Monday night.

it will be a gametime decision. "Who knows how aggressive I can be? I'll be looking to find guys like Lance [Thomas] or Kristaps [Porzingis]. And if I have to be more of a facilitator than be in attack mode, so be it."

Thomas has certainly earned the trust of Anthony and head coach Derek Fisher, particularly Monday when he tallied 24 points, hitting all nine of his field goal attempts. Thomas, considered an afterthought free-agent signing over the summer, has been on a roll lately. During his last five games, he's averaged 15 points, three rebounds, one steal, and almost two 3s per game, while shooting 76 percent from the field.

That kind of production is something Anthony can value, as the Knicks are no longer a one-man team. And at the

very least, Anthony has not only trusted his supporting cast, but has relished the role of mentor, so he knows if he's not at 100 percent Wednesday, he can lean on the others.

"From the moment we met, he's been like a mentor to me," said Porzingis. "I take that and try to play well for him, for all he's done for me."

Porzingis won't admit he's hit the rookie wall, but the stats say it all. He tallied only nine points and eight rebounds against the Magic, but he did add four blocks. He was a fourth-quarter spectator from the bench, due to his 3-of-12 shooting, but said he knows he can fight through this slump and at least contribute elsewhere until his shot returns.

"Maybe it's mechanics or my feet not set. It's sometimes those little things that add up to missed shots," said Porzingis. "But sooner or later they will fall again. I'm not too worried about that."

Anthony isn't too concerned about Porzingis' recent stretch either, and has faith the rookie can bounce back and find his rhythm again.

"It's gonna happen. It happens to everyone. We all go through it [but] we'll help him get out of it," said Anthony. "We've got to do a better job of helping him figure this out ... no doubt he can still help in other ways, too, though."

NFL power rankings | by Luke Miller

No. 1

Panthers (14-0)

The Panthers narrowly avoided losing this week as the Giants staged a 28-point comeback after falling behind 35-7. That's no reason to take them out of their top spot, as they've won close games all season. MVP front-runner Cam Newton has thrown five touchdown passes three times in his last five games.



No. 6

Steelers (9-5)

On a week where the other contender for best receiver in football left us talking about everything but his play, Antonio Brown's play on the field showed us that there are no other contenders. Brown had his eighth 100-yard game and found the end zone twice as the Steelers knocked off Denver to stay on pace for a wild-card spot.



No. 2

Cardinals (12-2)

David Johnson dragged Eagles all over the field on his way to 187 yards rushing on Sunday night. Despite injuries to Andre Ellington and Chris Johnson, the Arizona backfield is looking better than ever. They take on Green Bay at home this weekend and if they win, they'll have clinched a bye.



No. 4

Seahawks (9-5)

The Seahawks, 7-1 in their last eight games, kept rolling thanks to the continued presence of touchdown monster Doug Baldwin, who has caught 10 in his last four games. Even more promising is Christine Michael's ability to perform in the run game (84 yards) after Thomas Rawls was lost for the year.



No. 11

Jets (9-5)

The running game again fell off against Dallas and it probably made things a lot closer than it otherwise should have been. But Ryan Fitzpatrick has been something special in the fourth quarter this season. The Jets' game vs. the Pats takes on huge significance in the wild card race.



No. 3

Patriots (12-2)

The Pats can clinch home field for the AFC playoffs with a win Sunday at the Jets. The latest weapon in Bill Belichick's toolshed was full-back Joey Iosefa, who carried the ball 14 times Sunday. The Pats let the Titans game get a little close, but if we won't punish the Panthers, we won't punish the Pats.



No. 5

Packers (10-4)

The Packers found a middle ground between tearing it up in the run game and being abysmal with 103 yards on 28 carries for the team this past Sunday. They'll need more of that sweet mediocrity to stay balanced against the most balanced team in football, the Cards, this Sunday.



No. 15

Giants (6-8)

Odell Beckham Jr. managed to make sure no one is talking about the weekend's best game and most thrilling comeback. Of course, that comeback wouldn't have happened without Beckham's talent on the field, and now that talent won't be on the field (pending appeal) for the against the Vikings.



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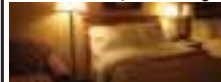
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Hexagon Word



Clues:

1. Sell overseas
2. Citrus fruit
3. Merriest
4. Purple skin mark
5. Edible kernel
6. Savage

Use the clues to fill in the spaces in the numbered hexagons. Each answer runs clockwise but can start anywhere in the shape. Where hexagons touch, they have the same letter. We've given you the first answer. The letters in the middle hexagon reveal a mystery keyword.

Mix 'n' Match

VIC	ICI	DER
ASS	INE	EST
BAR	AUL	NED
COM	IGA	SLY
DEA	MAN	TED
HOM	POO	TOR
MUT	DLI	DAL
NAV	BAR	ERS
HAR	IOU	IAN

Clues:

1. Murderous
2. Rebellious crew members
3. Roughed up
4. Course pitcher
5. Naval rank below captain
6. Speared, as a whale
7. Mostly poisonous
8. Savagely

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Take a set of letters from each column and combine them to form a nine-letter answer to each clue. Once finished, the remaining sets of letters will spell out another nine-letter word. This is your answer.

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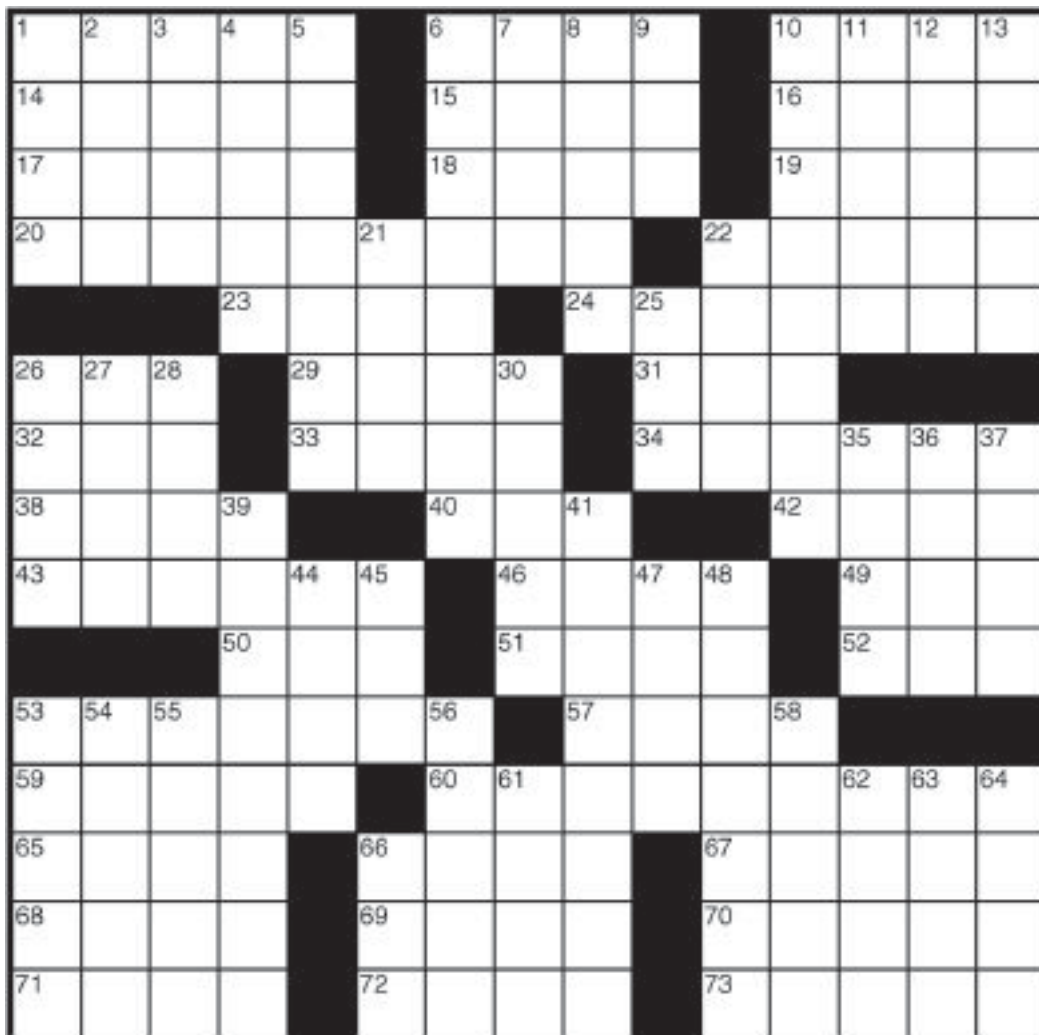
Across

- 1 Old Cannes cash
- 6 Between Tex. and Kans.
- 10 Casanova type
- 14 High-tech beam
- 15 Lurch
- 16 Endangered trees
- 17 Biscotto flavoring
- 18 Without the ice
- 19 Kind of belt
- 20 Prepares for the present moment? (2 wds.)
- 22 Shocking
- 23 Yul's film realm
- 24 Copy
- 26 Sea dog
- 29 No, to Ivan
- 31 Quit stalling
- 32 Sourdough's strike
- 33 It may be spliced
- 34 Parched feeling
- 38 Turf warriors
- 40 Just a little
- 42 Ms. Foch
- 43 First in line
- 46 Not right
- 49 Young wolf
- 50 Decimal base
- 51 Hurl forth
- 52 Tummy muscles
- 53 Stuffy scholars
- 57 Thailand neighbor
- 59 Big occasion
- 60 Reality (2 wds.)
- 65 Bagpiper's wear
- 66 Man-goat deity
- 67 Energy
- 68 He gave us a lift
- 69 Bull-market result
- 70 Elk cousin
- 71 No sweat!
- 72 Signs a contract
- 73 — salts

Down

- 1 Banner
- 2 Rajah's spouse
- 3 Yeah, right! (2 wds.)
- 4 Twig-and-mud homes
- 5 Manning
- 6 Angel, perhaps
- 7 Hang on to
- 8 Car-dealer's option
- 9 Mi. above sea level
- 10 Lead to (2 wds.)
- 11 Prince Val's wife
- 12 Target rival
- 13 Helena rival
- 21 Martha of dental ads
- 22 Ow!
- 25 Get tangled
- 26 Disco dancer (hyph.)
- 27 Ph.D. exam
- 28 Relax, as rules
- 30 Wild ducks
- 35 Costa —
- 36 Cold shoulder
- 37 Boxtop pieces
- 39 Fidget (2 wds.)
- 41 Ends a flight
- 44 On its way
- 45 Explosive letters
- 47 Tour de force
- 48 Date
- 53 Black tea
- 54 Musical set in Argentina
- 55 Reuben purveyors
- 56 Beau
- 58 Pounce on prey
- 61 Peanut shell
- 62 RN employers
- 63 Lhasa —
- 64 The people over there
- 66 Wk. day

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metro.us/horoscopes

- Aries** Tension is mounting, and tempers are short. Be careful how you approach subjects that affect loved ones. A relationship may be touch-and-go.
- Taurus** Get in the spirit of the season. Don't fret if you haven't completed your to-do list. Your time and attention will bring the highest rewards.
- Gemini** You need to slow down. Take a deep breath and refuse to make last-minute decisions based on worries about what others want or expect.
- Cancer** Offering your help to those less fortunate will be eye-opening and will give you a better sense of what life is all about.
- Leo** Make sure your motives are clear if you lend a helping hand to someone in need. You can't take on the weight of the world.
- Virgo** You'll want to please everyone, and with a little effort you can. Simple but thoughtful offerings are favored and will make a difference.
- Libra** Expect the unpredictable. Nothing will go according to plan. Don't get angry, just go with the flow and do your best to get things done on time.
- Scorpio** Be creative about how you help others. What you do to improve your family dynamic will have more impact than a monetary gesture.
- Sagittarius** You'll be moving fast and ready to take on challenges. Your ability to maneuver through crowds will help you finish what you start.
- Capricorn** Socializing will lead to false pretenses. Promises made will not be honored. You are best off relying on your own efforts.
- Aquarius** Getting involved in activities that are geared toward relatives or taking part in festivities in your community will bring you joy.
- Pisces** You may want to overdo it and spend more than you should, but it will be the little things you do that will actually make the difference. **EUGENIA LAST**

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easy

	2	7					4	9
		3	9		7			
1				5			8	
9			4		5			
		5	1	3	6	7		
			8		2			1
	5			1				6
			3		9	4		
7	4					9	1	

hard

3	7						6	
		6	8	5			4	
		8		7	6			1
4	5				9	1		
				3				
		3	4				8	5
5			7	2		8		
	1			6	8	9		
	6						2	7

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